

1 **"PROCESS FOR REDUCING SULPHUR EMISSIONS FROM A**
2 **FLUIDIZED BED COKE BURNER"**

3
4 **FIELD OF THE INVENTION**

5 The present invention relates to heavy oil fluid coking involving the
6 circulation of coke through a fluidized bed coke burner for developing heat to
7 be used in a fluidized bed coker. The invention has to do with reducing sulphur
8 gaseous emissions from the burner.

9
10 **BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

11 Fluid coking is a commercially practiced process applied to heavy oil,
12 such as bitumen, to produce lighter fractions.

13 The process is illustrated in Figure 1. It involves a fluidized bed coker
14 reactor working in tandem with a fluidized bed coke burner. In the reactor,
15 incoming feed oil contacts a fluidized bed of hot coke particles and heat is
16 transferred from the coke particles to the oil. The reactor is conventionally
17 operated at a temperature of about 530°C. Hot coke entering the reactor is
18 conventionally at a temperature of 645°C to supply the heat requirement of the
19 coker. "Cold" coke is continuously removed from the reactor and returned to
20 the burner. The cold coke leaving the reactor is at a temperature of about
21 530°C. In the burner, the cold coke is partially combusted with air, to produce
22 hot coke. Part of the hot coke is recycled to the reactor to provide the heat
23 required. The balance of the hot coke is removed from the burner as product

1 coke. The burner is conventionally operated at a temperature of 645°C. The
2 burner temperature is controlled by controlling the addition of air.

3 As mentioned, the combustion of coke in the burner is only partial in
4 nature. On entering the burner, part of the coke particle is burned and releases
5 volatiles. These volatiles support the combustion that provides the heat
6 required by the reactor.

7 The burner produces product gas which comprises fuel gas, H₂S, SO₂,
8 COS and coke fines. This product gas is burned in a boiler. A flue gas leaves
9 the boiler and is emitted to atmosphere through a stack. The flue gas contains
10 SO₂.

11 It is the purpose of the present invention to reduce the sulphur
12 compound content in the burner product gas and thus in the stack flue gas.

14 SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

15 The present invention is based on the results of an experimental
16 program conducted to determine the effect of coke burner operating conditions
17 on product gas composition, specifically with respect to sulphur gas production.

18 The following discoveries were made in the course of this program:

- 19 • It was found that the volatiles, represented by CH₄, were produced
20 by coke undergoing combustion at a lower temperature than the
21 sulphur compounds, represented by H₂S. More particularly, the
22 release of CH₄ commenced at a temperature of about 380°C and
23 reached a maximum rate at about 570°C, whereas the release of H₂S

commenced at about 500°C and reached a maximum rate at about 650°C;

- It was further found that the profile for H₂S evolution at increasing temperatures took the form of a parabolic curve having steeply rising and descending legs; and
- It was further found that there was very little diminution in the size of the coke particles in the course of pyrolysis in the burner.

From these observations we concluded:

- That volatile gases are produced from a thin outer skin portion of the coke particle and it is these gases that combust in the burner and produce most of the required heat;
- That since these volatile gases are produced at a significantly lower temperature than the sulphur-containing gases, one could reduce burner temperature and thereby reduce sulphur gas emissions, without significantly affecting the capacity of the burner to supply the heat needs of the coker;
- But one would need to increase the coke circulation rate, as the temperature of the hot coke leaving the burner would now be less, in order to prevent bogging and meet the heat need of the coker.

As a result of acquiring these understandings, a process was outlined involving:

- maintaining the burner temperature in the range of about 550°C - 630°C; and

- maintaining the coke circulation rate sufficient to meet the heat requirements of the coker, for example in the range 75 tons/min to 115 tons/min at an oil throughput of 110 kB/d to the coker.

The process was tested in a plant circuit consisting of two identical cokers. The burner temperature and coke circulation rate were changed from the conventional operating conditions as follows:

	<u>Prior Conditions</u>	<u>New Conditions</u>
• burner temperature	645°C	624°C
• coke circulation rate	80 tons/min	92 tons/min
• oil throughput per coker	110 kB/d	110 kB/d

The SO₂ discharge at the stack was reduced from 230 tonnes/day to 180 tonnes/day.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 is a simplified schematic of a known fluid coking circuit; and

Figure 2 is a plot showing the evolution of CH₄ and H₂S during pyrolysis of coke at different temperatures.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

The invention is based on the following experimental results.

Evolution of gases from coke

Experiments were carried out in which one gram of coke particles was loaded into quartz tubing and heated in a temperature-programmed furnace. Inert purge gas was used to sweep the volatile matter from the coke. Gas chromatography was used to analyze the effluent. Figure 2 compares the evolution of CH₄ and H₂S under temperature programmed (20°C/min) pyrolysis of cold coke. As shown, the CH₄ began to evolve at a lower temperature (~ 400°C) than the H₂S (~ 500°C).

Plant test

The process of this application was tested in a commercial plant consisting of two identical fluidized bed coker/burner circuits as shown in Figure 1. The conventional burner temperature was reduced and the coke circulation rate was increased. More particularly, the oil feedrate to each coker was maintained at 110 kB/d. The burner temperature was reduced from the conventional 645 – 650°C and maintained at 628 – 633°C (that is, at about 630°C). The coke circulation rate was increased from the conventional rate of 80 tons/min and maintained at 92 tons/min. The sulphur emission was monitored at the stack and was reduced from 230 tonnes/day to 180 tonnes/day.